



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON MAY 26th IN TOMS RIVER, N.J., TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting on Thursday, May 26, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant during 2010.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn – Toms River, at 290 Route 37 East in Toms River, N.J. Prior to the session's conclusion, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the plant's performance, as well as the agency's oversight of the facility.

Oyster Creek, which is the site of a single boiling-water reactor, is located in Lacey Township (Ocean County), N.J. It is owned and operated by Exelon Generation Co., LLC.

“Our Annual Assessment reviews allow us to step back and gauge whether the nuclear power plants we regulate are on the right track in terms of performance and adhering to the highest levels of safety,” NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. “Once we've completed these evaluations, we reach out to the public to share that information and to receive their feedback at a location near each plant. We welcome and value these exchanges.”

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with “green”, representing very low safety significance, and increase to “white”, “yellow” or “red”, commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, the Oyster Creek reactor operated safely during 2010. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed through the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, there were no inspection findings that were “Greater than Green” (rising to the level requiring additional NRC oversight) or any performance indicators that were other than “Green” (exceeding the threshold for the indicator and requiring additional NRC oversight) for the units. Therefore, for the remainder of 2011, Oyster Creek will continue to receive the very detailed inspection regime used by the NRC for plants that are operating well.

Routine inspections are carried out by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to each plant and by inspection specialists from the agency's Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. In 2010, the NRC devoted about 5,230 hours to inspection and related activity of Oyster Creek, including three major team inspections. Among the areas at Oyster Creek being inspected this year are the dry cask storage of spent fuel, emergency preparedness, radiological safety and the plant's radiological environmental monitoring program.

The agency issues its review of performance at specific plants twice a year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC's website, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual performance reviews every March, the public is provided with an opportunity to discuss the results. The meetings, which are held in the vicinity of the plant, are in keeping with the NRC's commitment to transparency and openness with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for Oyster Creek is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/oc_2010q4.pdf. The notice for the public meeting is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML111220429. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at PDR.Resources@NRC.GOV.

Current performance information for Oyster Creek is available on the NRC website at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/OC/oc_chart.html.

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